

# Transactions

APRIL/MAY 2008

TRANSPORTATION NEWS

FOR THE NINE-COUNTY

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA



## Workshops



Spring brings a new wave of outreach for the *Transportation 2035 Plan*, a work in progress that looks 25 years down the road. With a title of “Change in Motion,” the effort signals MTC’s commitment to promoting sustainability and mobility in the face of continued growth and global warming impacts. Attend one of the workshops below, and join the discussion about the trade-offs among various options for investing the region’s limited transportation resources — and weigh in on new funding opportunities. To RSVP, visit <[www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/T2035)>, or call 510.817.5981.

Sonoma County

MAY 6, 2008

Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm

Finley Community Center, Auditorium  
2060 West College Avenue, Santa Rosa

Solano County

MAY 7, 2008

Wednesday, 6-8 pm

County Government Center, Rooms 1600-1620  
675 Texas Street, Fairfield

Santa Clara County

MAY 8, 2008

Thursday, 6-8 pm

Martin Luther King Library, Rooms 225-229  
150 East San Fernando Street, San Jose

Contra Costa County

MAY 12, 2008

Monday, 6-8 pm

Civic Park Community Center, Social Hall  
1375 Civic Drive, Walnut Creek

San Mateo County

MAY 13, 2008

Tuesday, 6-8 pm

San Mateo County Government Center  
Board of Supervisors Chambers  
400 County Center, Redwood City

Alameda County

MAY 14, 2008

Wednesday, 6-8 pm

MetroCenter, Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium  
101 8th Street, Oakland

Marin County

MAY 19, 2008

Monday, 6-8 pm

San Rafael Community Center, Auditorium  
618 B Street, San Rafael

Napa County

MAY 20, 2008

Tuesday, 6-8 pm

Napa City-County Library  
Community Meeting Room  
580 Coombs Street, Napa

San Francisco County

MAY 22, 2008

Thursday, 6-8 pm

San Francisco State Downtown Campus  
Rooms E673-674, 835 Market Street  
San Francisco



LESTER LEFKOWITZ/GETTY IMAGES

## Bipartisan Panel Urges Federal Transportation Overhaul

AMBITIOUS GOAL: CREATE THE WORLD’S “PREEMINENT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM”

Shining a bright and rather sobering spotlight on the nation’s passenger and goods-movement transportation network, a 12-member blue-ribbon panel has delivered to Congress a hefty landmark report that calls for bold changes in federal transportation policies, programs, institutions and funding mechanisms.



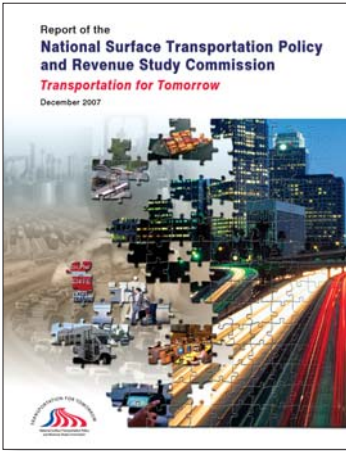
In its new report, *Transportation for Tomorrow*, the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission painted a picture of a transportation system at risk of serious decline and urged Congress to increase investment, expand services, repair infrastructure, demand accountability and refocus federal programs while streamlining spending categories from 108 to 10.

Chaired by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters, this small body with the big name was created by Congress to develop a national transportation vision and formulate recommendations for congressional reauthorization of federal transportation legislation

in 2009. MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger is a member of the bipartisan panel, having been appointed by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in 2006. The National Commission held public hearings across the country as part of an intensive 20-month study period.

At a hearing of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Chair James Oberstar (D-Minnesota) thanked the commission for its work and offered praise for the *Transportation for Tomorrow* report, which he compared in significance to the establishment of the Interstate Highway System in the mid-1950s and the passage of the landmark Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act that ushered in the post-Interstate period in 1991.

“This commission’s report will in time be seen as the transformational chapter in the transition to a new era of transportation policy for the 21st century,” Oberstar said.



View the *Transportation for Tomorrow* report and executive summary on MTC’s Web site, where you also can watch videos of the press conference and congressional hearing where the report was unveiled: <[www.mtc.ca.gov/legislation](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/legislation)>.

## A Clear and Present Challenge

The aim of U.S. transportation policy, according to the National Commission, should be “to create and sustain the preeminent surface transportation system in the world.” But, as the report makes clear, the gap between the present reality and the attainment of that goal is large, and growing.

The report’s *Executive Summary* states: “Conditions on America’s surface transportation systems — our roads, bridges and highways, our passenger and freight rail facilities, our public transit networks — are deteriorating. In some cases, the physical infrastructure itself is showing the signs of age. In almost all cases, the operational efficiency of our key transportation assets is slipping.”

Continued on back page



PATRICK EVAN

The National Commission presented its *Transportation for Tomorrow* report at a packed hearing of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

## Calendar

Unless indicated otherwise, all meetings take place at: Metropolitan Transportation Commission Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter Lawrence D. Dahms Auditorium 101 Eighth Street, Oakland (Across from the Lake Merritt BART station)

THURSDAY

MAY 1, 2008

10:30 am

Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee

1 pm

Bay Area Partnership Board\*

FRIDAY

MAY 9, 2008

9 am

Planning Committee\*

10 am

Operations Committee\*

10:15 am

Legislation Committee\*

MONDAY

MAY 12, 2008

2 pm

TransLink® Operating Group  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency  
1 South Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

TUESDAY

MAY 13, 2008

3:15 pm

Minority Citizens Advisory Committee

WEDNESDAY

MAY 14, 2008

9:30 am

Bay Area Toll Authority  
Oversight Committee\*

9:45 am

Administration Committee\*

10 am

Programming and Allocations Committee\*

12:30 pm

MTC Advisory Council

FRIDAY

MAY 16, 2008

10 am

Association of Bay Area Governments/  
Bay Area Air Quality Management District/  
Bay Conservation and Development  
Commission/Metropolitan Transportation  
Commission Joint Policy Committee\*

MONDAY

MAY 19, 2008

12 pm

TransLink® Management Group  
San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency  
1 South Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco

1:30 pm

Partnership Technical Advisory Committee

\* Webcast on <[www.mtc.ca.gov](http://www.mtc.ca.gov)>.

Note: Dates, times and locations of MTC meetings may change. Please confirm by calling 510.817.5757. Agendas, updated meeting schedules and meeting packets are posted on MTC’s Web site: <[www.mtc.ca.gov](http://www.mtc.ca.gov)>.

## Special Event



NOAH BERGER

## Bike to Work Day 2008

Put aside your car keys, and join the thousands from all around the Bay Area who plan to bike to work on **Thursday, May 15**. Stop by one of over 190 strategically located **Energizer Stations**, where you will be greeted by volunteers handing out complimentary treats and tote bags. Nominate someone you know who epitomizes the spirit of Bike to Work Day 2008 for the **Bike Commuter of the Year Award**. In fact, the entire month of May is National Bike Month. Celebrate by participating in fun-filled events such as **Team Bike Challenge**, a friendly competition that challenges commuters to pedal to the max during the month to earn points and win prizes. For more information and to pledge to ride (and to enter a raffle to win a new bike), go to <[bicycling.511.org](http://bicycling.511.org)>.



In Print

MTC’s just-issued annual report tells the story of the mega projects and headline-grabbing events of 2007 largely in photos. The cover sets the tone with a dramatic image of the melted freeway overpass that closed the MacArthur Maze, the region’s busiest interchange, in the spring of 2007. Other newsworthy events



2007 Annual Report: The Year in Photos

covered in the report include the Labor Day weekend operation to replace a major chunk of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, the construction of the Bay Bridge East Span here and in China, the opening of the second span of the Benicia-Martinez Bridge, and the official launch of the TransLink® smart fare card.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then this annual report speaks volumes about the vital roles played by MTC and its counterpart, the Bay Area Toll Authority, in keeping the Bay Area moving. — *Brenda Kahn*

To order a copy, send an e-mail to <library@mtc.ca.gov>. View online at <www.mtc.ca.gov>.



Facts & Figures

Region Holds Steady in Battle to Maintain Roadways; Need for More Funding Urgent

The bad news: Pavement conditions on the Bay Area’s more than 40,000 lane miles of local streets and roads earn only a “fair” grade in a recently released MTC report, with the typical stretch of asphalt being seriously worn and likely to require rehabilitation soon. The good news: Pavement conditions have been largely stable for the past several years, with the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) score over the 2004–2006 period rising a single point to a score of 64 out of a maximum possible 100 points from a three-year average of 63 points in 2003–2005.

“It’s encouraging to see we’re at least holding the line against the wear and tear caused by traffic, weather and time,” said MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger. “But there’s a lot of work still to be done.” For quite a while, the region’s average PCI score has been hovering close to 60, which is the point when pavement begins going downhill fast in the absence of preventive maintenance and rehabilitation. Tellingly, no Bay Area city or county scored in the excellent range for 2004–2006 (meaning a PCI score of 90 or higher on a 100-point scale).

Top 10: Cities/Counties With Best Pavement		
Rank	Jurisdiction	2006* PCI Score
1	Brentwood	85
	Los Altos	85**
3	Contra Costa County	83
	Oakley	83
	City of Santa Clara	83
6	Foster City	82
	Gilroy	82**
8	Dixon	81
	Belvedere	81**
10	Sunnyvale	80
	Dublin	80
	City of Sonoma	80**

“This shows just how urgent the need for additional funding really is,” said Heminger. “The state gasoline tax traditionally has been the biggest source of funds for local street and road maintenance. But that tax has been the same 18 cents per gallon since 1994, and its purchasing power erodes each year.” — *John Goodwin*

See rankings for all Bay Area cities and counties at <www.mtcps.org>.

Notes for table:  
\* Figures represent the average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) for a three-year period ending in 2006. PCI: 90-100, excellent; 80-89, very good; 70-79, good; 60-69, fair; 50-59, at risk; 25-49, poor; below 25, failed.  
\*\* Data for 2006 was extrapolated from 2005 inspections.

Transportation for Tomorrow  
Continued from front page

Rewriting “The Three Rs”

Declaring that “applying patches to our surface transportation is no longer acceptable,” *Transportation for Tomorrow* envisions a complete refocusing of the nation’s transportation programs while reaffirming a strong overall federal role in this area. The recommendations can be grouped into three Rs:

- **reforming** how the nation upgrades and expands its transportation network, from how projects are picked to how they are built;
- **restructuring** federal transportation investment programs to concentrate on areas of genuine national interest; and
- generating new **revenue**, in part by increasing the federal gas tax and eventually by instituting user fees, and particularly congestion

pricing — charging motorists tolls that vary according to traffic levels. The three Rs are designed to work together to promote a stronger economy, faster commutes and cleaner air, and to save lives. The commission was not unanimous in its recommendations; three of its members, including Secretary Peters, issued written dissents. Not surprisingly, the issue of new revenues proved espe-

cially controversial for the panel. “We know that nobody likes the idea of higher fees or taxes,” noted MTC’s Heminger. “But our estimates indicated that the United States needs to invest at least \$225 billion annually for the next 50 years to improve performance on our transportation network. We are spending less than 40 percent of this amount today.” — *Joe Curley*

Announcement

Excellence in Motion 2008:  
Call for Award Nominations



What moves you? Is your bus driver the friendliest, most helpful person on earth? Have newly accessible bike paths lured you off the couch and back on two wheels? Has a group in your area made it safe to cross the busiest of streets

again? Isn’t it time they get the recognition they deserve? MTC is seeking nominations for its biennial awards program. Tell us about the people and organizations who have made a significant impact on the safety, efficiency or quality of your daily travels. In addition to searching for a Grand Award winner and several Merit Award winners, MTC is seeking nominations for five special awards:



Doris W. Kahn Accessible Transportation Award

Honors a person or organization whose efforts have benefited the elderly or persons with disabilities



John F. Foran Legislative Award

Honors a state or federal legislator whose work has had a positive effect on transportation



Greta Ericson Distinguished Service Award

Recognizes quality leadership in the transportation profession



David Tannehill Special Employee Award

Intended for a transportation employee who goes beyond the call of duty



Miriam Gholikely Award

Celebrates accomplishments in the fields of community service, volunteerism, advocacy, leadership and minority affairs

The deadline for entries is Friday, May 23, 2008. You can submit your nomination online at <www.mtc.ca.gov>, or call 510.817.5757 to request an application. Winners will be announced at a ceremony in October 2008.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION WWW.MTC.CA.GOV

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- Scott Haggerty, Vice Chair  
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- Amy Worth  
Cities of Contra Costa County
- Ken Yeager  
Santa Clara County

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